

North Carolina Air National Guard

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GOV. EASLEY UNVEILS NEW VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT MILITARY COMMUNITIES

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

2003

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, our service men and women are known for being courageous and ready to do their duty when called upon, whether it is being deployed overseas for months or having a permanent change of duty station and moving their families with them; and

WHEREAS, frequent moves, leaving friends, changing schools and extended family separations can present challenges for a child; and

WHEREAS, military children are raised in a diverse environment and have the opportunity to experience different, unique ways of life and cultures; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting to reflect and recognize both the contributions and personal sacrifices military children make; and

WHEREAS, since 1986 the Secretary of Defense has designated each April as "The Month of the Military Child";

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MICHAEL F. EASLEY, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim April 2003 as "**THE MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD**" in North Carolina, and urge our citizens to focus attention on military children and our responsibility to them.

Declares April "Month of the Military Child"

RALEIGH—Gov. Mike Easley today unveiled the state's new website that will help residents find information about how they can help support military families and their communities. In addition, Easley declared April the "Month of the Military Child."

"These brave young men and women are risking their lives for our American freedom and many of them are leaving behind loved ones that depend on them," said Easley. "I ask the people of North Carolina to focus their support for our troops on the families and communities they have left behind. This new website gives specific information for those willing to lend their time and resources, but it is also a place for people needing help. Families seeking assistance can locate organizations and individuals willing to lend a hand."

The website, www.governor.state.nc.us/mil will help link military families who need help with people who want to volunteer. Many of our military families are in need of childcare, help with household duties and other various errands. In addition to providing that information, the website will give guidelines for individuals and businesses that want to donate and show support in other ways. The website will also have a current events section where residents can find out more information about upcoming events and ways they can support the troops and their families.

During the month of April, each military base will be holding special events to recognize and celebrate the "Month of the Military Child." This has been tradition with the Department of Defense since 1986 and a tradition Easley deemed important as well. This initiative was developed through collaboration with the Division of Veteran Affairs, the American Legion, The North Carolina Commission on Volunteer Service and Community Service in the Governor's Office, area Chambers of Commerce, N.C. National Guard, and a representative from each of our military bases.

North Carolina has a strong tradition of being the most military friendly state in the nation. There are approximately 120,000 active duty personnel stationed on North Carolina bases, more than 25,000 residents of North Carolina stationed at bases outside the state, and approximately 25,000 civilians serving in the United States Reserve Forces and National Guard Components.

US AIRWAYS INTRODUCES 'SALUTE SAVINGS' FOR U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL

ARLINGTON, Va., April 21, 2003 -- US Airways today introduced "Salute Savings," a discount program for U.S. military, with special fares as low as \$79 each way, based on roundtrip purchase. US Airways "Salute Savings" rates are available to active and reserve military and their immediate families through government-contracted commercial travel offices throughout the U.S. The fares are valid for tickets purchased through Dec. 31, 2003, for travel completed by Feb. 12, 2004.

"The service that the men and women of the U.S. military provide at home and abroad is invaluable," said US Airways President and Chief Executive Officer Dave Siegel. "This program is designed to make special fares and travel bargains available for their widespread use."

Under the "Salute Savings" program, fares must be purchased roundtrip and are available for travel originating in the U.S. to destinations across the US Airways system, including Europe, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean. For information on these fares, military personnel or their military I.D.-carrying family members should contact their commercial travel office. Tickets are non-refundable and must be purchased at least three days in advance of departure. One Saturday night stay is required, and a maximum 30-day stay is allowed. Seats are limited, and other restrictions apply. Fares are available to the immediate families of members of the Armed Forces when the member is part of the traveling party. An immediate family member is defined as a parent/guardian, spouse/partner, or child.

US Airways is the nation's seventh-largest airline, serving nearly 200 communities in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Europe. Most of its route network is concentrated in the eastern U.S., where it is the largest air carrier east of the Mississippi. US Airways, US Airways Shuttle, and the US Airways Express partner carriers operate over 3,300 flights per day.

If you would like to try to get cheaper rates you will need to call Omega Travel at Ft. Bragg. They do all the leisure travel for the military. They can be reached at 910-436-2058.

CORPORATE DONATIONS GO TO SOLDIERS' FAMILIES

by Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 10, 2003) - At least two companies are aiding deployed troops by honoring the sacrifices of their family members with donations of gifts and volunteer hours.

Mary Kay Cosmetics has donated items such as sun block and lip balm to troops through their families and Home Depot has pledged household repairs.

Home Depot pledged \$1 million and 1 million volunteer hours to make general household repairs for the loved ones of deployed troops. "Project Homefront" was first organized to assist the family members of the more than 1,700 Home Depot employees that have been mobilized, but since has been extended to include family members of all deployed active-duty military. Extending the project was made possible officials said by a partnership that includes "Rebuilding Together," a volunteer organization that restores low-income houses and communities, and USA Freedom Corps, a White House council that's working to get more Americans to volunteer.

Not only is Home Depot willing to help with general home repairs, the company is adorning homes with military memorabilia. Blue Star Service Banners, which were designed in 1917 to be displayed by families who have loved ones serving in the Armed Forces, will be given to each of Home Depot's 1,7000 mobilized employees. Each blue star represents one family member serving in the Armed Forces. A banner can have up to five stars, signifying that five members of that family are currently on active duty. For more information on Project Homefront and Blue Star Service Banners, visit <http://www.projecthomefront.org/>.

Mary Kay Cosmetics could not send tubes of shaving cream, sun block, lip balm and lotion to the troops in Kuwait because of mailing restrictions to safeguard against terrorist threats. However, the company shipped 60,000 items to family members at the 3rd Infantry Division rear at Fort Stewart, Ga. The Georgian infantrymen are in one of the units currently occupying Baghdad, and they have captured thousands of enemy forces, including key members in the Special Republican Guard. "How could we do anything less for these troops?" said Michael Lunsden, Mary Kay's senior vice president for government relations. "I'm a sponge for news, and I could see that the 3rd ID was going to be the tip of the spear going into Baghdad." This is the second Gulf War where Mary Kay has made contributions. In 1991 50,000 items were delivered from Texas to family members at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. On April 3 donations rolled onto Fort Stewart in an 18-wheeler tractor-trailer, which brought on "shock and awe" for some onlookers. "I was so impressed with Mary Kay's desire to want to do something for the families that have been left behind," said Susan Wilder, the mobilization, deployment manager for the local Army Community Service. "As a military spouse, I know that sometimes we're forgotten, and this donation was so sweet." The gifts will be given to families in the form of goodie bags, Wilder said. Spouses will most likely share the gifts by sending some items to the front lines, she said. Only family members and close friends of deployed troops are able to send mail to Kuwait or surrounding countries, and programs that allowed the general public to send mail addressed to "Any Service Member" were cancelled more than a year ago after anthrax hit the mail. However, an Army contractor who wanted to help end boredom for soldiers in Kuwait was able to get temporary assistance from the American Red Cross.

James Kratzer, a contractor at the Army Research Laboratory in White Sands Missile Range, N.M., enlisted the help of some of his colleagues and started "Paperbacks for Troops." "It became obvious they were bored at times," said Kratzer. "The soldiers spent most of their time cleaning their rifles or playing cards, but there was nothing for them to read. That planted a seed in my mind." After collecting 3,500 books, the Red Cross delivered half of them to Camp Doha, Kuwait. The rest of the shipment has been curtailed to allow existing military support carriers to focus on combat-specific shipments, said an official from the American Red Cross.

BOOKS & SITE FOR MILITARY BRATS—CHILDREN OF DEPLOYED SOLDIERS

By Ferguson-Cohen.

www.booksforbrats.net home of "Daddy, You're my hero!" and "Mommy, You're my hero!" books.

& www.otonomimedia.com/bratzone the KID SAFE "BratZone" for children of military personnel

"Daddy, you're my hero!" and "Mommy, you're my hero!" helps ease children's fears about war. The child of Vietnam Vet writes children's book to aid military families dealing with deployment

March 20, 2003, Brooklyn, NY - Around the world, children of military personnel are being confronted with the difficulties of having a parent deployed in the service of our country. Children's book author and military brat, Michelle Ferguson-Cohen, has written, "Daddy, you're my hero!" and "Mommy, you're my hero!" to help military and reservist's families speak with children about deployment. The books address deployment from a child's perspective. They talk about this separation in a simple manner to assure and comfort small children. The books also suggest tips to maintain communication and deal with feelings of helplessness. "I wrote these books from my heart. I know what it's like to experience what these children are facing," says Ferguson-Cohen. "My own father was deployed in the service of our country many times when I was young."

Little Redhaired Girl Publishing, Inc. has sold hundreds of these books to military families and hear from many educa-

tors, parents, psychologists and military FRGs (Family Readiness Groups) who are using the books as a resource to help speak with their children about the deployment of a parent and war in general.

Currently, there are 1.2 million children of active duty personnel according to the Military Times. There are also many families of National Guard and Reserve personnel who are dealing with deployment for the first time. Ferguson-Cohen, who has had a long career in the music industry, is the daughter of a retired Army General who served two tours in Vietnam, as well as the granddaughter of a soldier killed in action during WWII.

The two titles are the first in the Books for Brats series for children of parents in military and public service brought to you by Little Red Haired Girl Publishing. As a service to the military and reserve communities, a multimedia version of the book is available online free of charge to facilitate immediate need and is also available for sale in paperback version at www.booksforbrats.net.

For more information, please contact:
Little Redhaired Girl Publishing 917.640.2844
Or booksforbrats@aol.com

CONGRESS INTEREST IN RESERVE ISSUES

04/08/03 - **WASHINGTON (AFPN)** -- Congress has increased its focus on helping the reserve components since more than 200,000 members of the National Guard and Reserve have been mobilized for the war on terrorism. With newly introduced bills to enhance reservists' benefits, along with the existing House Guard and Reserve Caucus plus the newly formed Senate Reserve Caucus, reserve issues have come to the forefront in Congress. To enhance congressional efforts, Air Force Reserve Command has streamlined its process to provide timely, accurate and consistent information by offering reservists numerous pathways to surface issues and ideas. Besides submitting initiatives through their chain of command, reservists can propose ideas through the Air Force Reserve Advisory Board and the Office of Air Force Reserve's Policy Integration Directorate in the Pentagon. The AFRAAB accepts any issue or initiative, from addressing existing situations to considering the most creative idea, allowing each reservist to be a catalyst to change. The policy integration directorate, which goes by the designation REI, deals with all legislative issues for the command at the Air Staff level. The directorate recently expanded AFRC's Congressional Outreach program, which ensures congressional members are aware of the Air Force Reserve and its significant contributions. REI staffers set up visits for AFRC Commander Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III and wing commanders with their congressional members, provide informative briefings to professional and personal staffs of congressional members and their committees, and answer questions posed by U.S. senators and representatives.

"All reservists should be aware that their voice matters because congressional members are interested in what their constituents have to say," said Wayne Gracie, director of REI. "Our goal is to facilitate communication between Air Force reservists and Congress. We have a great story to tell." More information about REI is available at <http://www.re.hq.af.mil>. (Courtesy of AFRC News Service)

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD: When A Parent Returns

by Ken Swarner/Military.com 4/8/2003

It's the end of a long deployment. The kids have been climbing the walls, excited to finally have dad back home. The moment he steps in the door however, the children withdraw or act out. Why? Experts say that any change, good or bad can upset children, especially when one parent has been gone for an extended period of time. "There is so much change when a parent comes home," said Carole Groux, a family counselor with Family Psychology Associates near Luke Air Force Base in Arizona and wife of an Air Force pilot. "Young children are not able to articulate, or put into words the feelings they have while they are experiencing them." In young children, excitement and fear can look very much the same," said Groux.

"When a parent returns after being gone for an extended period of time, a child experiences many emotions that are displayed in very confusing ways to an adult," she added. "And they may be very different than what is expected." For example, Groux said a son could be angry that his dad is back because he will no longer have all of his mom's attention. Parents should check in with their children and listen to their feelings. Groux said there might be some resentment toward the deployed parent upon his or her return. There also may be an underlying fear that the parent will leave again.

"Keeping the lines of communication open as the family dynamics change after the return is important, Groux added. "There will be readjustment and an array of feelings experienced as the parent reestablishes himself back into the family. It is important to talk about the changes openly -- allowing for all family members to have their say. Groux suggested seeking professional help if you are having a difficult time readjusting upon your return. "A third party can sometimes help alleviate anxiety or tension before it gets out of hand," she added. Those who return from the war in Afghanistan or Iraq may also encounter especially confused children. Pastor Mark Chittwood, a former Coast Guardsman and now Baptist minister near McChord Air Force Base in Washington State, said most children are afraid, anxious, and upset over the war and that they probably struggle to deal with those emotions. Chittwood said military children need to know that just because war was close to their parent, they are safe.

Joseph Tafoya, director of the Department of Defense Education Activity, said fears are worse for kids who have par-

ents who are deployed. In a recent Army news release, Tafoya said parents should be aware of what their children hear, be that on the news or anywhere else. Groux said that also goes for what a returning parent says about his own war experiences. "Children don't need to know what you did over there," Groux added. Groux said it's enough to tell a child that dad or mom did the job they were asked to do. She said if a child asks if you killed someone deflect the question or change the subject. If need be, even lie. "Children aren't capable of understanding something like that," Groux added. "It's just not necessary to explain."

Families who successfully transition a homecoming does so by accepting change. "There will be a period of adjustment for the whole family when the parent returns home from a deployment. The routine will have to be readjusted now that mom or dad is back in the picture."

The at-home parent has a tremendous role in setting the stage for the return, Groux said. "Create a count-down calendar with the kids to help them prepare for the big arrival home," she explained. "A family welcome home party is a wonderful event in which the kids can participate. Involve the children in coloring a large "Welcome Home" sign and making cookies or snacks for the party." Groux also suggested that the children have quality time with the parent as soon as possible after the arrival home. "Children do not understand 'wait' when they are seeing their parent for the first time in weeks or months, regardless of the reason," she said. Groux also said the deployed parent could help by sharing his or her feelings about being away. "Sharing how much the deployed parent missed his or her family will reassure the children that they are loved and will help to build a sense of security for the children," Groux said.

Spouses must also reconnect in a healthy manner to help the children adjust as well. "Talking privately with the left-behind spouse to make sure that all rules and activities are understood allows for a smooth transition back into the household routine," Groux advised. "This eliminates possible tension that could occur between the parents." The transition home, while joyous for families, still takes work to be smooth and healthy. In the long run, it may also help everyone feel better about the next time mom or dad deploys.

Downloadable Children's Books to Families of all US Active Military Personnel

From Lawrence W. Lee, President, Cirrus Arts Corporation

Cirrus Arts Corporation president, Lawrence W. Lee has created a web site which provides free, downloadable children's books to families of all US active military personnel. There are no strings attached, and not even any advertising. I do not collect any data on visitors, nor do I request email addresses. It is my way of giving back to those who are defending my freedoms. Please visit the web site at <http://www.childrenzbooks.net> Thanks for your consideration. Sincerely, Lawrence W. Lee, Cirrus Arts Corporation

Red Cross Provides Counseling, Helps Loved Ones Stay in Touch

LAURA GENEROUS

The Catawba Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross, Armed Forces Emergency Services, is marshaling resources to help members of the military and their families. "Every day, the Red Cross carries news to servicemen and women worldwide," said Susan McDonald, chairman of volunteers. "The long separations and stressful situations that occur when a service member deploys often places serious emotional and financial strain on families. "The Red Cross links military personnel and their families through services which include confidential counseling as well as neutral, impartial assistance when and where needed, particularly during times of crisis at home," she said.

Community-based members of the military -- National Guard members and reservists -- and their families are entitled to the same Red Cross emergency services as full-time active duty personnel, she said. When someone is mobilized or deployed with the Reserve or National Guard, the American Red Cross keeps them in touch with their families, verifies emergency leave information, secures emergency financial assistance and helps families

cope with separation when their loved ones are defending the country. The Catawba Valley Chapter has worked with the community-based military through several local programs, including the Armed Forces Emergency Services support group, which has been successful in years past, she said. The Family Support group meets the first Monday of every month. The next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. May 5 at the Catawba Valley Chapter, 1607 Highland Ave. N.E., Hickory. Child-care is provided by the Catawba Valley Chapter youth group.

Scarlet Tremain, volunteer support coordinator of the Armed Forces Emergency Services support group, hopes that military families will take the opportunity to learn about Red Cross services and meet other families in similar situations. "We would like to invite and encourage family members in the area to come and learn how the American Red Cross can assist and support them," Tremain said. "This is an excellent opportunity to meet with other families and our Red Cross team."

ANHEUSER-BUSCH GIVES TROOPS, THEIR FAMILIES FREE ADMISSION TO SEAWORLD, BUSCH GARDENS, SESAME PLACE

'Operation Salute' Expresses Appreciation For Their Service, Sacrifices

SAN ANTONIO (April 17, 2003) - Anheuser-Busch today announced it will give free single-day admission to its SeaWorld, Busch Gardens and Sesame Place parks to active duty military, active reservists, U.S. Coast Guard, National Guardsmen and as many as four of their direct dependents, **beginning the Friday of Memorial Day weekend and concluding Veterans Day, Nov 11**. The offer also has been extended to all coalition forces serving with U.S. troops in Operation Iraqi Freedom. "It is our privilege to offer our parks to the men and women of our armed forces and their families," said Patrick Stokes, president and chief executive officer, Anheuser-Busch Cos., Inc. "It is a small gesture of thanks for the hardships endured every day by our soldiers and those closest to them."

"Operation Salute" will give free admission at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay; Busch Gardens Williamsburg; SeaWorld Orlando; SeaWorld San Diego; SeaWorld San Antonio; and Sesame Place in Langhorne, Pa. "Operation Salute is exactly what we mean at the USO when we talk about the incredible power of 'Thank You,'" said Edward A. "Ned" Powell, president and chief executive officer of the United Service Organizations (USO). "It is an extraordinary example of a company's recognition of the sacrifices our military makes on behalf of all Americans."

Anheuser-Busch has supported the U.S. armed services for nearly 150 years. In 1921, Adolphus Busch's widow, Lilly, opened the Busch family garden to the public, donating admission fees to disabled veterans. Anheuser-Busch has previously honored U.S. armed forces with free admission to its theme parks. Nearly 1 million service members and their families visited free during Yellow Ribbon Summer following the first Gulf War and during the Anheuser-Busch Salute to America's Heroes, a post-9/11 tribute that included all branches of the U.S. military.

- SeaWorld -

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TGIF NEWS
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